



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Office of the Chief Academic Officer

Summer 2010

Social Studies

Summer Learning

Packet

Grades 6-8

Introduction

The student activities in this packet are designed to reinforce major social studies concepts and skills, while also being fun and interesting. It is also hoped that these activities will encourage family interaction.

This packet has been adapted from Miami-Dade County Public Schools,
<http://www.dadeschools.net/winterBreak/default.asp>

Activities

- Write a **letter** to President Barack Obama and describe three issues or concerns you wish to see him address during his presidency. Explain why these issues or concerns are important to you and the nation.
- Find ten store-bought products in your home. These products can be food, cleaning supplies, etc. Make a **three-column chart** with the following headings: Product, Made In ____, and Distance from District of Columbia. List each product on your chart and the country in which that product was produced. Find a world map with a scale and measure the distance from where each product was produced to Washington, D.C. For example, if the product was produced in China, measure the distance from D.C. to China with a ruler, write down the distance, and then refer to the scale on the map you are using and calculate the distance accordingly. Record the distance on the chart. Write **2-3 paragraphs** explaining why you think this information is or is not important. Why should we care where our products are made and/or how far away those places are?
- Research what life must have been like for people living in the American colonies during the American Revolution (around 1776-1781) in the months of December and January. Write a fictional **journal entry** from the perspective of someone from each of the following geographic areas: the Northern Colonies, the Middle Colonies, and the Southern Colonies. Be sure to research each geographic area in order to find out what life was generally like for people living during that time period in that particular region (e.g. perspective on, and priorities for, the revolution, agriculture, climate, culture, etc.) and write each journal entry to reflect your research findings.
- Municipal (city/town) governments set money aside to be able to respond to natural disasters such as hurricanes, floods, tornadoes, and harsh winter blizzards. Research District of Columbia's emergency funds to find out how much money is allocated to be able to respond to natural disasters. Now research other cities like New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and/or Kansas City to find out what their allocation is for emergency management for natural disasters. Record your findings on a chart. Create a **chart** comparing and contrasting your findings.

- Pick an important figure from American history. The person can be from any time period. Write a **short report** about why this person is famous by describing his/her contributions to society. Explain why you feel it is important for people to know about this particular person's contribution to history. Also explain how and why this person inspires you.
- We have a Mayoral election in November. Write a **letter to the editor** of a local newspaper that explains what you want to see your Mayor improve in your city. You should not only list and describe the issues in Washington, D.C., but also give the Mayor suggested solutions to these problems.
- Research your favorite NBA basketball team's schedule for the 2010-2011 season. Find a map of the United States. On the map, plot the different points/cities (away games) where your team will be playing. Place the name of the city next to each dot that you place on the map and the date that the game will be played. Pick 5 of the locations and pretend that you are going to attend each of these away games. Calculate the distance you will have to travel to attend each away game. Write a fictional **journal entry** describing what it was like traveling to one of the away games and the things that you were able to see and experience on your trip.